However, the shortfall is due to levies/taxes on ethanol imposed by the different States. The matter has been taken up with the concerned State Governments to reduce/remove the duties and taxes on ethanol meant for doping with petrol. Some of the States like Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Madhya pradesh and Jharkhand have recently exempted/reduced the import and export fee.

**Manpower in oil and Gas PSUs**

579. **SHRIPRASANTACHATTERJEE-**
**SHRITAPAN KUMAR SEN**:

Will the Minister of **PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS** be pleased to state:

(a) the number of permanent employees working in PSUs under the administrative control of this Ministry as on 31st March, 2007, unit-wise; and

(b) the number of contract/casual/contingency workers working in these units as on 31st March, 2007?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL**): (a) and (b) The number of permanent employees working in the major PSUs under the administrative control of this Ministry and the number of contract/ casual/contingency workers working in these PSUs are as under:

(As on 31st March, 2007)

| Name of die P 'SU 33810 | Number of permanent employees 17495 | Number of contract/casual/ contingency/workers |
|---|---|---|
| IOCL | 29862 | 20031 |
| HPCL | 10891 | 18585 |
| BPCL | 13968 | 3250 |
| GAIL | 3474 | 8762 |
| OIL | 8476 | 2799 |
| EIL | 2551 | 1 |

**Procurement of LPG cyclinders from Norway**

580. **PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:** Will the Minister of **PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS** be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to procure domestic LPG cylinders from a Norwegian company;

(b) if so, the features of the new LPG cylinders to be procured from the Norwegian company;

(c) the terms and conditions on which such LPG cylinders would be procured;

(d) whether the safety aspects of such LPG cylinders have been taken into account; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL**): (a) to (c) Government has conveyed "in principle" approval to the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) for expanding the product line by way of introduction of composite cylinders for marketing domestic LPG, subject to there being no subsidy element in the LPG to be marketed through these composite cylinders. To start with, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) along with Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) intend to import some cylinders and do test marketing in selected cities.

(d) and (e) OMCs are procuring LPG cylinders from cylinder manufacturers who have valid manufacturing licences from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Chief Controller of Explosives (CCOE). LPG cylinders procured by OMC meet the required quality standards.

OMCs have reported that necessary approval of CCOE has been obtained for use of composite cylinders for LPG CCOE has also granted approval to M/s Ragaco AS, Norway for their composite cylinders.

**Permission of break from drilling activities**

581. **SHRI GREESH KUMAR SANGHI**: : Will the Minister of **PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS** be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that oil industry's exploration and production companies have been urging Government to grant a three year break from drilling eseploratory wells,

if so, whether any penalties have been imposed on such companies as they are failing short of the work target promised to Government; and

whether grant sought for three year break may not result in substantial decrease in crude oil and gas production as even now we are importing about 40 per cent of our requirements of petroleum products?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA. J. PATEL**): (a) Yes, Sir. A few E&P companies have approached Government seeking a drilling moratorium for a period of about three years for deepwater area's in view of global shortage of deepwater rigs.

As per Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) contractors are required to complete Minimum Work Programme (MWP) within a given period in an exploration Phase. As the issue of moratorium is under consideration, amounts in lieu of unfinished work programme have not been imposed as yet.

Till date, Government has not approved any such break.

**Price fixation of LPG**

†582**. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:**
**SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:**

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some formula has been made to fix the consumer sale price of LPG in the country;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.